

COMMUTING PROFILE

SOUTHWEST REGION

MARCH 2025

Overview

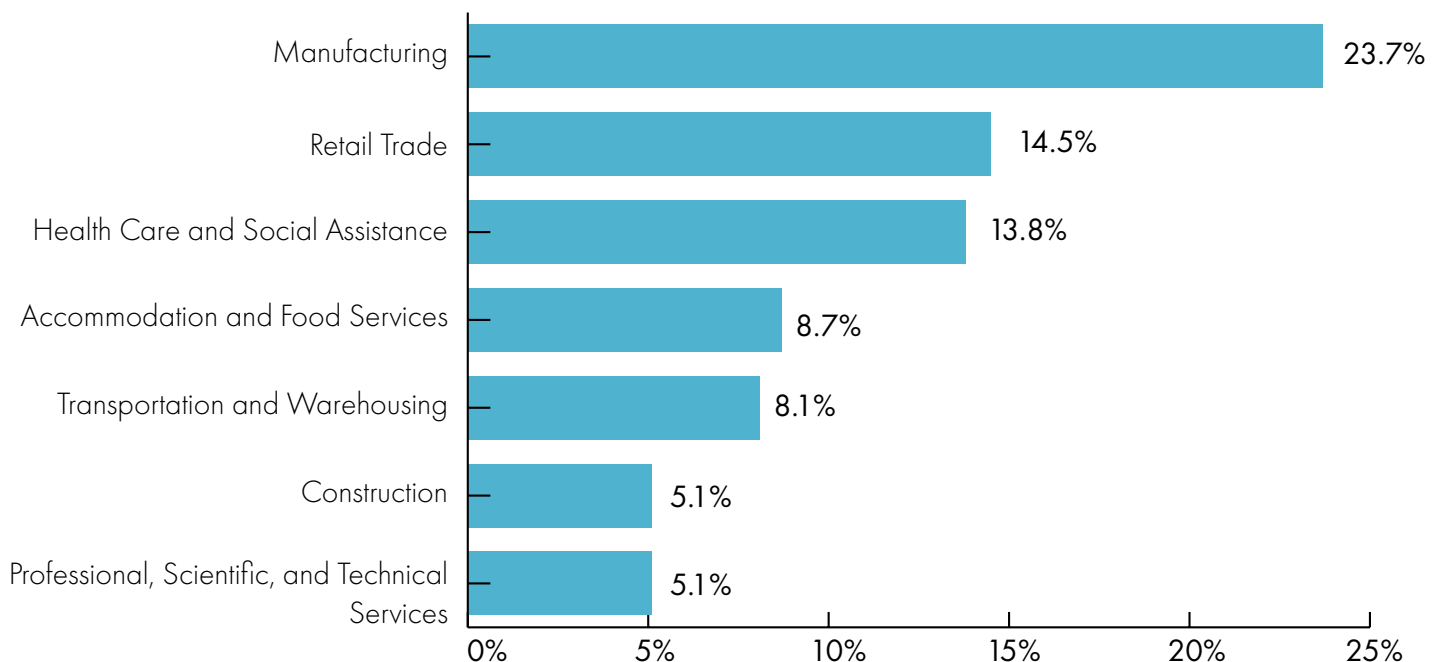
The Southwest Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of seven counties: Barry, Barton, Dade, Jasper, Lawrence, McDonald, and Newton. Some of the larger cities in the region include Joplin, Carthage, Monett, Neosho, and Webb City. In 2022, the Southwest WDA employed 4.2 percent of Missouri's workforce. Most workers in the region (50.4%) were aged 30 to 54. Workers aged 29 or younger were 25.9 percent of the workforce and those 55 or older were 23.6 percent. In 2022, 45.4 percent of workers in the Southwest WDA earned more than \$3,333 per month. Of the remaining workers, 17.0 percent earned \$1,250 per month or less and 37.6 percent earned between \$1,251 and \$3,333 per month. In 2022, there were more men (55.7%) than women (44.3%) in the Southwest WDA workforce.

In 2022, 41.2 percent of employees living in the Southwest WDA commuted fewer than 10 miles to work, 23.7 percent commuted 10 to 24 miles, 20.8 percent traveled more than 50 miles to work (20.8%), and 14.3 percent commuted 25 to 50 miles.

Industry

Manufacturing was the largest employing industry in the region at 22,433 jobs (23.7% of total jobs in the region). *Retail Trade*, *Health Care and Social Assistance*, *Accommodation and Food Services*, and *Transportation and Warehousing* were other major industry sectors having at least 8 percent of the region's employment share. Joplin, Carthage, Monett, Neosho, and Webb City were the top cities for employment in the Southwest WDA.

Top Southwest WDA Industry - Employment Percentage



Where the Southwest Labor Force Works and Lives

Of the 94,751 workers employed in the Southwest WDA in 2022, 70.1 percent commuted to work from within the region. The remainder (29.9%) commuted into Southwest WDA from homes outside of the region.

Description	2022	
	Count	Share
Southwest WDA Labor Market Size		
Employed in the Southwest WDA	94,751	100.0%
Living in the Southwest WDA	99,842	105.4%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	-5,091	-
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency		
Living in the Southwest WDA	99,842	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Southwest WDA	66,415	66.5%
Living in the Southwest WDA but Employed Outside	33,427	33.5%
In-Area Employment Efficiency		
Employed in the Southwest WDA	94,751	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Southwest WDA	66,415	70.1%
Employed in the Southwest WDA but Living Outside	28,336	29.9%

Of the region's residents who are in the workforce, 33.5 percent, or 33,427, commuted to jobs outside of the region. The Southwest WDA attracted 28,336 workers from outside of the region. More than 66,400 Southwest WDA residents lived and worked in the region.

The top five Missouri counties where Southwest WDA workers resided (in descending order) were Jasper, Newton, Lawrence, Barry, and McDonald. These counties were home to nearly 67 percent of the region's workforce.

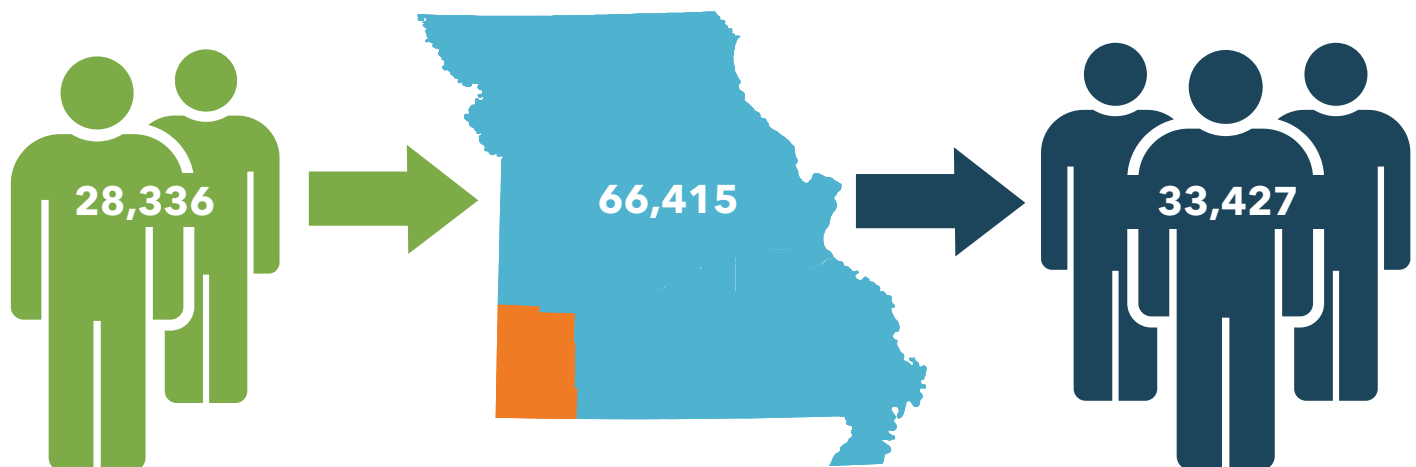
Inflow/Outflow

Overall, 99,842 employees lived in the Southwest WDA and 94,751 workers were employed in the region, resulting in a net outflow of 5,091 workers from the region.

Internal Jobs Filled by
Outside Workers

Internal Jobs Filled by
Residents

External Jobs Filled by
Residents



The following table shows the worker composition for the job inflow and outflow groups as well as worker characteristics of the interior job flow. Of the 66,415 individuals who lived and worked in the region, 25.9 percent were aged 29 years or younger, 50.8 percent were aged 30 to 54 years, and 23.3 percent were aged 55 years or older. About 42 percent worked in the Services industry.

Southwest WDA Description	2022	
	Count	Share
Outflow Job Characteristics		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	33,427	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	9,715	29.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	16,270	48.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	7,442	22.3%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	6,325	18.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	12,493	37.4%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	14,609	43.7%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	6,031	18.0%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	10,346	31.0%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	17,050	51.0%
Inflow Job Characteristics		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	28,336	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	7,403	26.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	14,036	49.5%
Workers Aged 55 or older	6,897	24.3%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	5,202	18.4%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	9,767	34.5%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	13,367	47.2%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	6,384	22.5%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	10,657	37.6%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	11,295	39.9%
Interior Flow Job Characteristics		
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	66,415	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	17,183	25.9%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	33,755	50.8%
Workers Aged 55 or older	15,477	23.3%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	10,897	16.4%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	25,837	38.9%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	29,681	44.7%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	22,761	34.3%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	15,906	23.9%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	27,748	41.8%

Commuter Pattern

The top five counties where Southwest WDA residents worked (in descending order) were Jasper, Newton, Greene, Barry, and Lawrence. All but Jasper County had at least half of their residents commuting outside their county of residence for work.

The table below indicates that many workers commuted to another county for employment. Larger cities, such as Joplin in Jasper County, attracted workers from the surrounding counties. Jasper County also had a lower percentage of workers who left the county to find work. The Southwest location in the state, in addition to Interstate 44 and U.S. Highway 60 access, improves the ability of Southwest Region residents to commute to their workplace.

Southwest WDA	
Percent of Employees Working Outside of Home County	
Barry	58%
Barton	70%
Dade	73%
Jasper	42%
Lawrence	80%
McDonald	70%
Newton	67%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2022*), URL: <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

**2022 is the latest year for which LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (commuting data) is available from the U.S. Census Bureau. To maintain the consistency of data in this report, all relevant data used is also from 2022, although later data for some data points was available.*

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